

a distant memory by [wolfish_willow](#)

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Summary:

He didn't know how long he'd been...here. Where time seemed to stand still.

a distant memory

Author's Note:

Dipping my toes into Dead by Daylight, but sticking with someone familiar with Steve. Unbeta'd. Feel free to point out any typos I missed. :)

My contribution for the Vernal Equinox Prompt Challenge over on the 30+ Fanfic Discord.

For the prompt: The first sign of spring

Steve loved autumn, once.

It used to mean school was back in session. He thought that reason might have surprised some people, if anyone who knew him was around to hear it. School had never been a place where he excelled, except maybe in basketball. But as a kid, his summers were made up of a lot of lonely days and nights outside of the handful of parties his parents allowed him to throw. People only showed up for the pool. Even Tommy. For a long time, his best friend couldn't be bothered to come over unless there was something in it for him; something more than Steve's company. Steve, whose parents never much liked his company either, understood.

But in the fall, he was so busy catching up with friends and getting started in training for the team that his lonely summer became a distant memory until the next year. Everything was loud again after two months of quiet. Steve hated the quiet.

It was always so quiet here.

Autumn also brought with it Halloween; something else he had loved as a kid. Getting to dress up. Become someone else for a night. Pretend that he was someone worth more than what he could give to the people around him. Hell, he'd loved it right up until the night Nancy—

That was a distant memory now, too.

He didn't know how long he'd been...here. Where time seemed to stand still. The campfire crackled and burned in an attempt to stave off the bite of chill in the air. It never quite managed. Occasionally the other survivors would sit close, offering what warmth they had to give as they waited to be called. The longer they were here, the less heat they seemed to give off. Or maybe that was his imagination.

The trials were worse; he knew they were even if it was more a feeling in his bones than a solid memory he could grasp. He knew when he stepped through the mist, there was more cold and darkness; pain—so much pain that he couldn't quite—and death. But at least he was moving. He had always been moving, before.

Now, just as sure as this place was frozen in eternal autumn, he was stuck. Getting back home hadn't crossed his mind in...time worked differently here, with no days to count by and the trials being so hazy, but it must have been months. Could have been years. It was hard to tell; hard to care, except for how much he missed the sun.

Steve would give a lot to see this never-ending fall give way to winter. For the trees surrounding them to lose the rest of their leaves. For snow to blanket the ground and sap what remaining heat they had. He would welcome all of that, and the trials that would fill the time in between, if it meant that he would one day again catch a glimpse of those nearly-forgotten first signs of spring.

Author's Note:

Hope you enjoyed this sad little ficlet. Kudos and comments are, as always, appreciated <3